

## **REMARKS**

### **A. Background**

The present amendment is filed in response to the Examiner's Office Action mailed November 30, 2004. Claims 1 and 2 were originally pending. Claims 1 and 2 are amended and new claims 3-25 are added. Claims 1-25 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

### **B. Objection to the Drawings**

The Office Action objects to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5) for failing to include reference numerals. In response, Applicant has amended the drawings to include reference numerals, as required. Entry of the drawings as amended and removal of the objection thereto is therefore respectfully solicited by Applicant.

### **C. Objection to the Specification**

The Office Action objects to the specification for failing to include reference numerals that correspond to the drawings. In response, Applicant submits herewith a substitute specification to replace the originally-filed specification, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.125. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added as a result of the substitution of the specification. Applicant further submits that the substitute specification serves to clarify the original disclosure so as to assist the Examiner in examining the application. Entry of the substitute specification is respectfully solicited by Applicant.

**D. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112**

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as failing to define the invention in the manner required by Section 112, second paragraph. In response, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 2, and has added new claims 3-25 to clearly and positively specify various aspects of the presently claimed invention. Applicant submits that claims 1 and 2, in addition to claims 3-25, are allowable and therefore solicits removal of the rejection to these claims under Section 112.

**D. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, as best understood, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,622,451 to *Ellis*. However, *Ellis* – assuming *arguendo* that it qualifies as a reference under Section 102 – fails to teach each and every element of the pending claims and thus fails to anticipate the present claimed invention under Section 102.

It is first noted that claims 1 and 2 as originally submitted have been completely rewritten. As rewritten, amended independent claim 1 requires, in a multi-portion structural component system, a first structural portion, a second structural portion, and “means for *intermeshing* the first structural component with the second structural component *in a unique arrangement . . .*.” *Ellis* teaches no such structure. Indeed, while *Ellis* discloses a pair of elongated covers that attach to one another via biscuit members and slots to form a cylinder, *Ellis*, col. 1, ll. 32-47, it is devoid of any teaching that such attachment forms a unique arrangement of the covers or that that the attachment occurs as a result of an intermeshing between the elongated covers. Consequently, *Ellis* fails to teach or suggest each and every element of claim 1, and thus cannot be used to anticipate the present invention. Further,

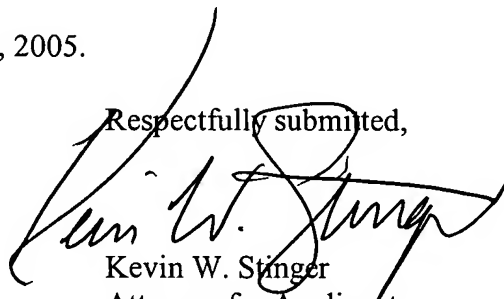
inasmuch as claims 2-7 are variously dependent on claim 1, they are also allowable for at least the reasons given above. Applicant further notes that new independent claims 8, 13, and 20 contain similar limitations and as such are also allowable over the cited art, as are their respective dependent claims. Applicant therefore submits that each of the above claims is patentably distinct and requests that the Section 102 rejection in view of *Ellis* be withdrawn.

### CONCLUSION

In view of the discussion and amendments submitted herein, Applicant respectfully submits that each of the pending claims 1-25 is now in condition for allowance and that all objections to the application have been resolved. Therefore, reconsideration of the rejections and objections is requested and allowance of those claims is respectfully solicited. In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that can be clarified in a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 31<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

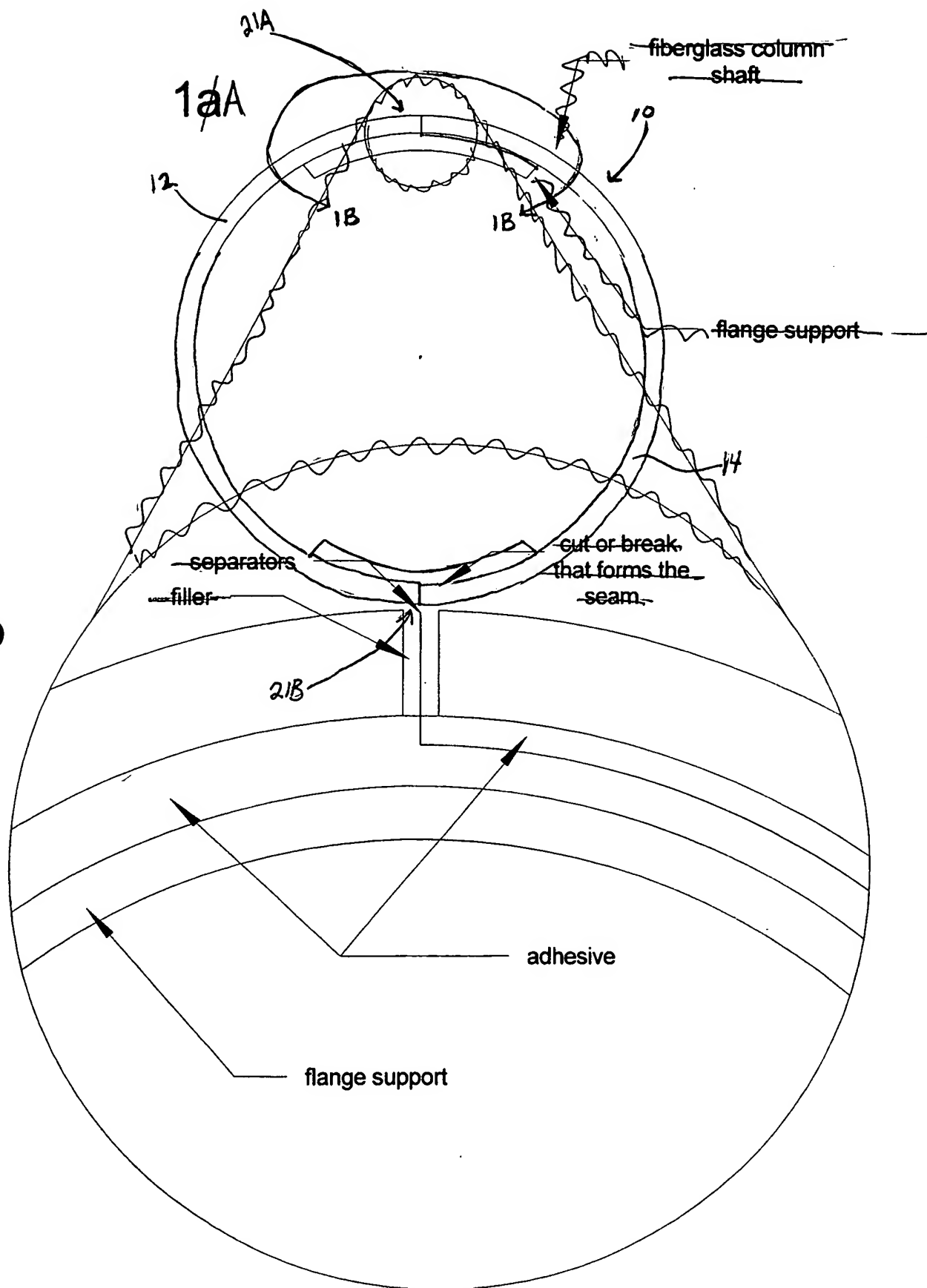


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**A. AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS**

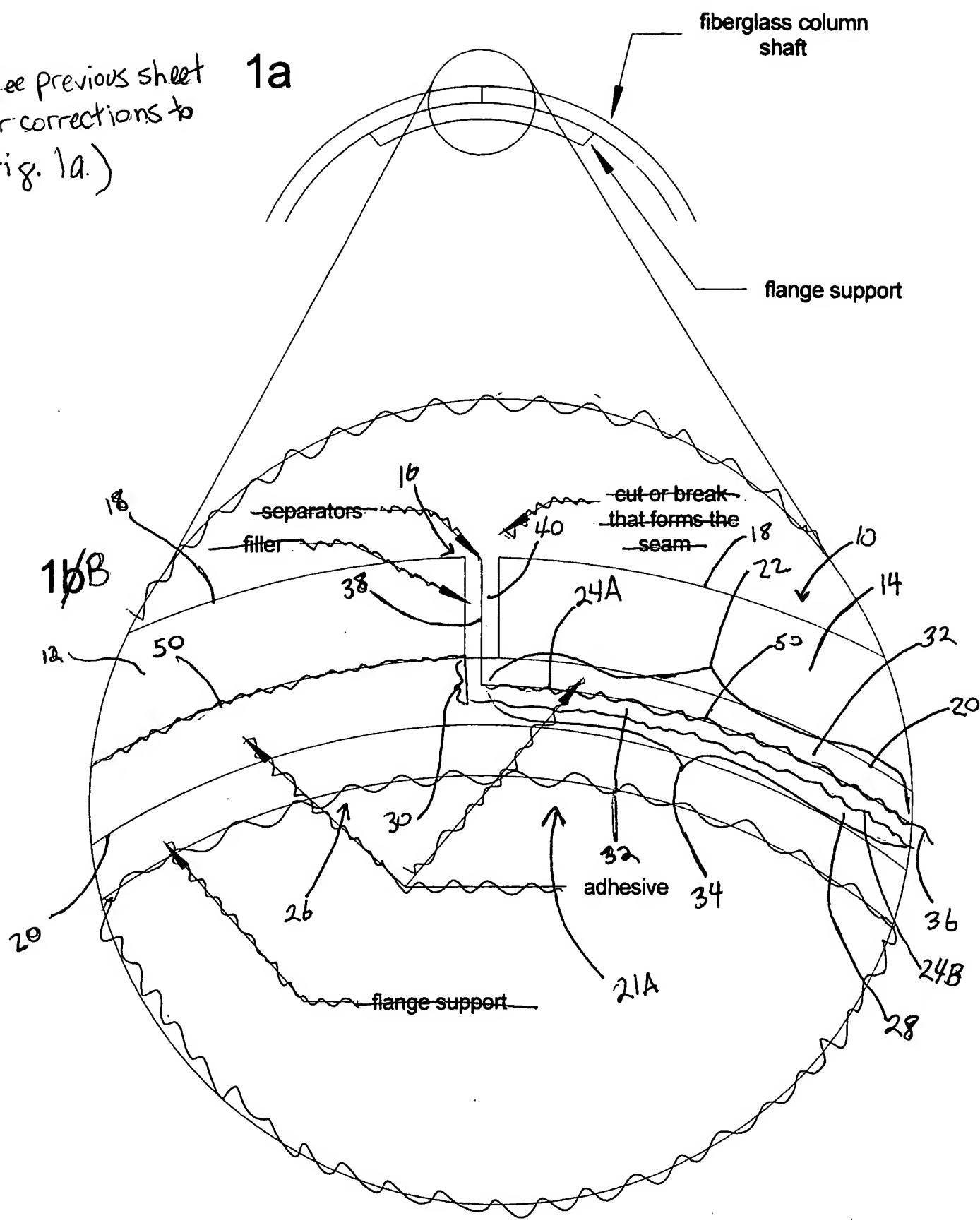
Please amend the drawings related to the present application. Specifically, please amend Figures 1-3C to include various reference numerals and minor changes made to clarify the drawings. For the Examiner's convenience, replacement drawing sheets are included herewith showing the addition of the reference numerals and minor changes. In addition, annotated copies of the original drawing sheets are also included showing the changes made in red ink. These sheets are attached hereto as Appendix C.



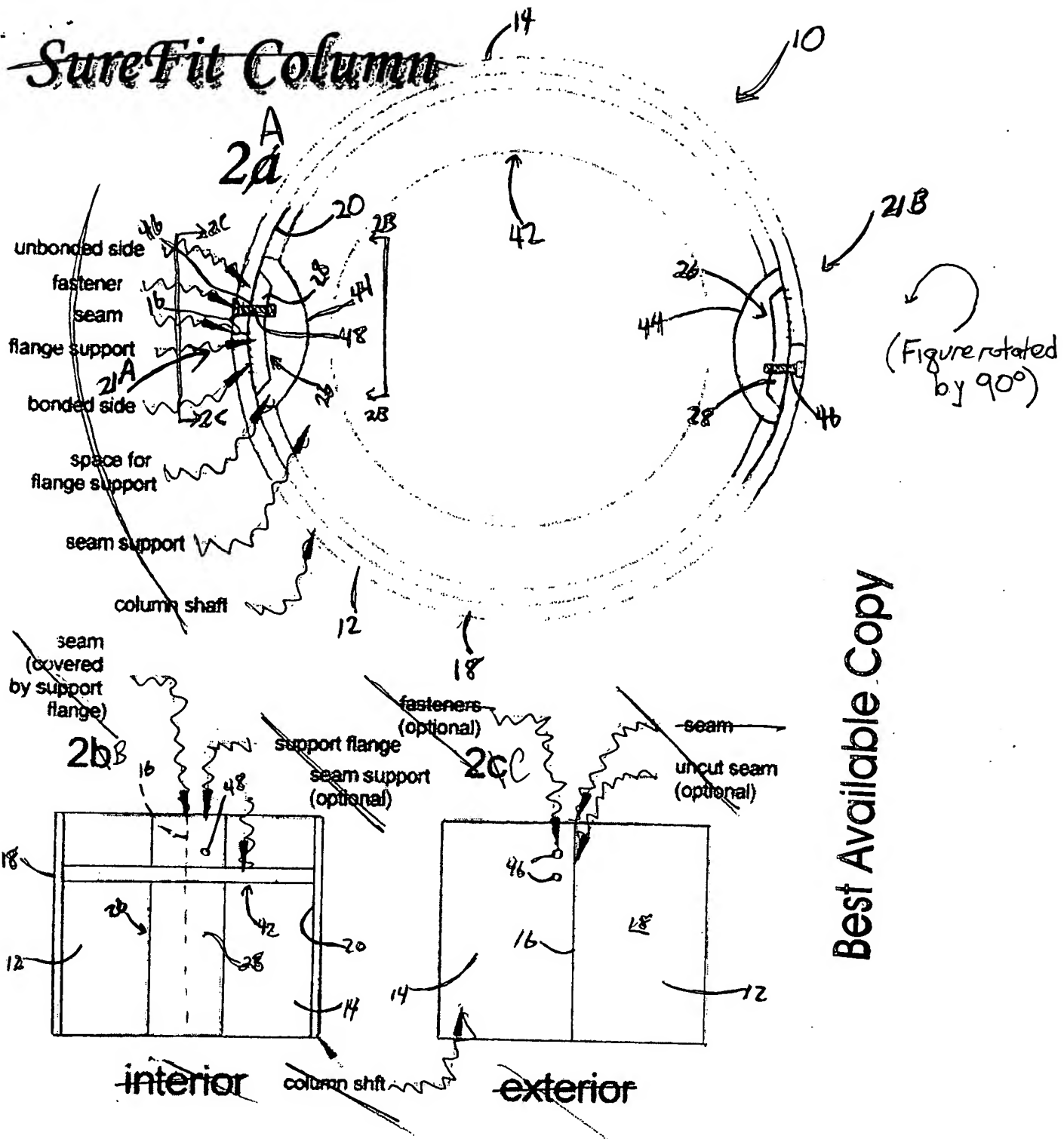
(See next  
sheet for  
corrections  
to Fig. 1b)

(See previous sheet for corrections to Fig. 1a.)

1a

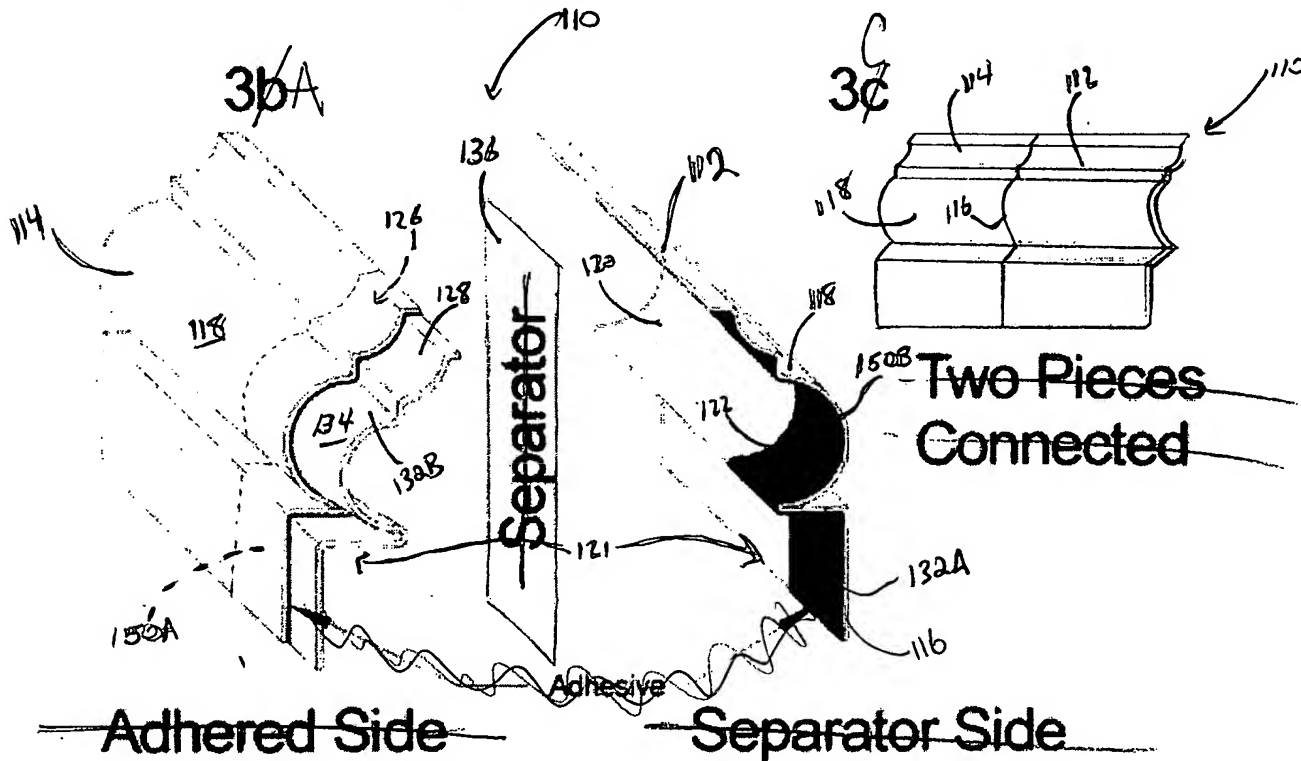
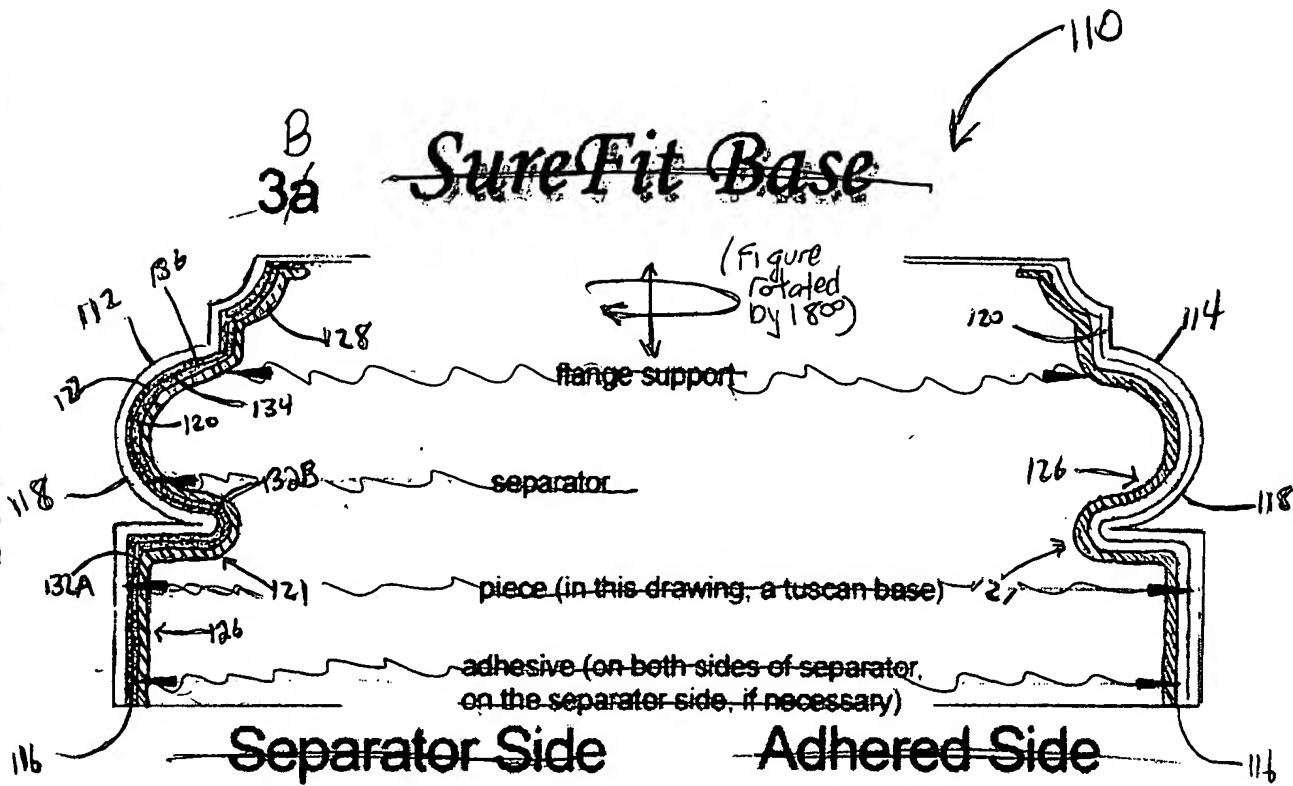


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